



The earthy exteriors of a hotel in the Utah desert inform an interior designer.

In this column, we ask a prominent figure from the Surface universe to let us in on a personal obsession.

BY AMY LAU

Amangiri is a resort worth a pilgrimage. Located on a mesa in southern Utah's Escalante National Monument near red canyons and large-scale rock formations known as the Grand Staircase, the hotel blends into its surroundings and takes references from local Native Americans and ranchers.

I'm really into vernacular architecture like this, having grown up in Arizona going to old pueblos—which my grandmother used to paint—with my father. It's why I have a thing for cave houses, which I've stayed in all over the world. Geologically, they're just fascinating. I love the idea of a sequestered village, a jewel-like area that is a part of the nature around it.

For Amangiri, the architects took the aggregate—the stone and cement from the surrounding area—and mixed it all together to make buildings that are the same color and density as the rocks around them, but polished so they glow. Everything is built on a very low, modern plane; it almost looks like a ruin within a landscape. The huge windows in the rooms frame the scenery. This part of Utah has the most beautiful sunrises and sunsets, and with everything being the same color, it really puts emphasis on those kind of natural nuances.

I love resorts that aren't heavy handed, that really allow the outside to pull you in. The property has ingeniously integrated water features, including various pools and water pavilions. The swimming pool curves around an escapement of sandstone rock, giving the illusion that it's melting into the desert. The sound of the water—that pulls you in, too. That kind of dialogue is extraordinary.

The author is an interior designer based in New York City.

A room at Amangiri. (NEXT SPREAD)
A landscape view of the resort.



